

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 23, 2019
Contact: Merridith A O’Leary, R.S., Public Health Director
City of Northampton
(413) 587-1214

Press Release – Toxic Algae Bloom at Magnolia and Triangle pond

On August 21, 2019 the MDPH had identified through photographs, the presence of cyanobacteria algae at Magnolia and Triangle pond which are located off Hockanum Road and 1st Square Road. It is presumed that the presence of cyanobacteria (algae) cells may exceed MDPH guidelines for recreational waterbodies in Massachusetts. The Northampton Health Department has posted public advisories at all access points of the ponds that water should be avoided until further notified.

Cyanobacteria are aquatic bacteria that is also referred to as “blue-green algae.” Cyanobacteria can be found in many different environments, including freshwater and marine ecosystem which produces a toxin that is harmful to humans and pets. Despite being named “blue-green algae,” blooms may appear in many different colors including red, yellow, brown, blue, and green, and often form a scum on the water’s surface.

The following should be avoided:

- Swimming
- Fishing
- Kayaking/Boating

Health concerns from harmful algae blooms vary depending on the type of exposure and the amounts. Contact with these algae can cause skin and eye irritation. Ingesting small amounts can cause gastrointestinal symptoms. Ingesting large amounts of toxins may cause liver or neurological damage. Inhaling water spray with algae in it can cause asthma-like symptoms. Small children and pets are more susceptible to the effects of toxins than adults.

If you believe you or your pet came into contact with this algae, you should immediately wash yourself/pet with clean water and contact your primary care physician or veterinarian.

The Northampton Health Department will advise the public once the advisory is lifted.

Please contact the Health Department at healthdept@northamptonma.gov or 413-587-1214 if you would like to report a body of water that may have a possible algae bloom. We would also like to remind recreational water users “When in Doubt, Stay Out”.

More information can be found at: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/harmful-algae-blooms-in-fresh-water-bodies>